

NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
PRAIRIE HILLS PLAZA
July 27, 2017

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Russ Cusack, Becki Hoff, Timothy Starks, Jason Sutheimer, Gillian Plenty Chief, Matthew McCleary, Tina Bay, Kevin McDonough, Deborah Jendro, Eugenie Lang, Trevor Vannett (phone), Bruce Murry, Vickay Gross (1:20 p.m.)

Members Absent: Darcy Severson, Kirsten Dvorak, Susan Sisk, Bruce Klootwyk, Jamie Hall, Joseph Hall, Marshall Longie, Darren Moos

Others Present: Aimee Volk, Patty Wanner, Tom Solberg

VR Director Russ Cusack called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Action: A motion was made by Jason Sutheimer and seconded by Bruce Murry for approval of agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of April 27 & 28, 2017 Minutes.

Action: A motion was made by Bruce Murry and seconded by Jason Sutheimer to accept the SRC quarterly minutes from its last meeting on April 27-28, 2017. Motion carried.

Introductions: Everyone introduced themselves.

SRC Overview – Russ Cusack and Patty Wanner

The purpose of the State Rehabilitation Council, when meetings occur, functions, and the duties of the 4 subcommittees were discussed. The membership guidelines and structure was also explained.

DVR Budget – Russ Cusack

- The annual Basic Support grant award is a little over \$10,400,000 of federal funds with state match of around \$2,815,000. The federal/state match percentages are 78.7% and 21.3%.
- We start spending our state match at the beginning of the new federal fiscal year which begins October 1st. On 10/01/2017, the match will start to be spent for FFY 2018 federal grant award. The matching funds are spent both at the regional offices and the state office. The program accountant tracks the match expenditures to determine when the match is met and the federal funds can start

being spent. The match for the FFY 2017 federal grant has been met and we are currently spending federal dollars from our FFY 2016 grant, which are available until 09/30/2017.

- Beginning with the FFY 2015 Basic Support grant, a new federal requirement was put in place. It is now required that 15% (approximately 1.5 million dollars) of the federal funds be used for pre-employment transition services to students. North Dakota has been able to meet this requirement.
- VR also receives an annual grant of \$300,000 for Supported Employment services. This grant has a federal requirement that 50%, or \$150,000, of the federal funds to be spent on youth. The youth portion of the grant also has a required match of 10%, which would be \$16,667 of state funds. The \$150,000 for adult services does not have a required match.

The committee is interested in looking further into waitlist for TBI, MI and other. The Employment Committee will look into it.

Annual Business Awards - Patty Wanner

Ad-hoc Business Awards sub-committee is responsible for reviewing the 8 regional award winners and selecting a statewide winner. Members of the SRC will also be presenting the awards at the VR Annual Luncheon on October 26, 2017 in Bismarck. The ad-hoc committee needs one more person on this committee. Bruce Murry volunteered to be on the committee.

Expanded Supported Employment Pilot Program – Cheryl Anderson on behalf of Pride, Michele Burney – Minot State University, Angela Bray - Kalix, Josh Villbrandt - HIT, Inc., Heather Stueven - Community Living Services (CLS)

This program started in 2015. Vocational Rehabilitation funded NDCPD for a three year project to initiate and oversee training and technical assistance for four pilot sites to utilize employment first, best practices.

- Community Living Services (CLS)
- Hit
- Kalix
- Pride

The goal of the project is to build the capacity to deliver supported employment services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities that lead to competitive integrated employment opportunities, for those currently enrolled in day supports and/or employed in non-integrated environments.

The four projects were asked to provide an update:

Kalix expressed their main takeaways from being part of the grant was:

- Importance of the discovery process
- Importance of partnerships with businesses
- Expanded tools
- Customized employment

To continue to be successful Kalix would need funding to provide:

- Additional support and adequate hours to meet the needs of the job applicants
- Potential employee education
- Continued marketing and community education to increase buy-in
- Continued access to technical assistance and training

HIT expressed their main takeaway from being part of the grant was:

- The discovery process takes time.
- Guardian, team and individual buy-in is key.
- People have surprised us with their abilities.
- The WISE training has been excellent.
- Job coaching is intensive to start, but there is ability to fade (individual basis).
- Expect do-overs even with the discovery process.

HIT feels to continue that:

- Most people we are working with should be able to move into extended services.
- More resources will be needed up front early on in an individual's case with the understanding this support will eventually pay dividends.
- Continued training and education to keep going-stay current in employment practices.
- Continued open communication and support from all state entities.
- The ability to "try and try again" if needed--individual job loss and support.

Community Living Services (CLS) stated that:

- Employment for ALL individuals no matter the significance of their disability
- Discovery Tool is effective in customized employment
 - Average discovery process takes 42 hours
- Job Development Practices
 - Customized employment
 - Networking
 - Informational interviewing
 - Knowing the business' point of view
 - Business prospective verses human services language
 - Referring qualified job candidates

The CLS provided the following summary:

- 11 total participants through Discovery Process
- 7 total customized employment jobs developed with an average wage of \$9.00 per hour
- 5 participants placed in customized employment jobs
 - 120% increase in wage from crew employment
- 8 referred to Vocational Rehabilitation

July 28th, 2017

Members Present: Vickay Gross, Matthey McCleary, Genie Lang, Deborah Jendro, Becki Hoff, Timothy Starks, Bruce Murry, Jason Sutheimer, Kevin McDonough, Trevor Vannett (phone), Russ Cusack, Tina Bay

Members Absent: Kirsten Dvorak, Jamie Hall, Joseph Hall, Bruce Klootwyk, Marshall Longie, Darren Moos, Darcy Severson, Susan Sisk, Gillian Plenty Chief

Additional Members Present: Aimee Volk, Patty Wanner, Lou Ann Nider, Borgi Beeler, Cheryl Anderson

Vickay Gross, Past Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Region V Update – Curt Markel, Regional Administrator from Fargo, ND.

- Region V serves 6 counties – Steele, Traill, Cass, Richland, Ransom, Sargent
- To be fully staffed there are 15 employees
 - 8 counselors, VRS, CAS, business support, 3 support staff, and an RA
- There was a counselor and support staff that resigned on 6/30/17
 - 1 VR counselor passed her CRC exam on 7/20

The VR office was relocated out of SEHSC on 1/4/16. New space continues to work out well as the resource room is being utilized, more timely assessments in the assessment room, conference room has Polycom and all around is a better fit with the business community.

- Goals – VRS is on track with their established goals.
- Employed 104 – 120 - 87%
- Applicants 328 – 356 - 92%
- VR Plans/Service 260 – 200 - 130%
- % Employed 6 months – 85%
- Current average caseload = 54
- Business climate in Fargo
 - Jobs in trade, transportation, utilities, education, health services, government
 - Sears went out of business, several clothing stores, and Ground Round
 - Sanford opened up on 7/25

Region VIII Update – Becki Hoff, Regional Administrator from Dickinson, ND.

- Kari Shea retired on 12/31/16. Becki Hoff was hired to fill her position.
- They are now are fully staffed with 5 full-time staff in the office, with 2 counselors, 1 Vision Rehabilitation Specialist and one administrative assistant.
- They are on track to meet their VR closure and application goals for the year. As of 06/30/17, they were at 86% of meeting the goal for IPE development.
- The Vision Rehabilitation Specialist has met her service goals and is steadily getting new intakes and helping with vocational assessments.
- Region VIII serves 8 counties in southwestern North Dakota. They serve 12 high schools; 37% of their caseload is transitioning youth.

- There is a Pre-Employment Transition Services contract with Dickinson High School that is serving 95 transition students.
- The unemployment rate in southwestern North Dakota ranges from 1.6% to 2.4.
- Most jobs open in Region VIII are in the medical, service and transportation industries. Many of the oilfield related opportunities are for occupations requiring specialized training and/or years of experience.

Membership/Public Relations Committee – Deborah Jendro

We have received one new application that we will hold onto as we are at 61% with a disability. Susan Sisk has put in her resignation, Vickay Gross and Russ Cusack are retiring and we will continue to work on those applications when applicable. Last meeting Julie Magnus with Workforce resigned and there is a potential applicant that is thinking about taking the position. Julie Keunnen is our new Boards and Commissions contact liaison. All applications are required to be completed online, effective immediately. There are two people on the committee that have not come and per the bylaws “if a member misses two meetings of the four (4) regularly scheduled meeting, it shall be reported to the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for review”. It was decided to send a letter to the governor’s office regarding this situation.

Planning/Evaluation Committee – Russ Cusack

There were two policies that were presented to the full council for review.

Policy for Transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services

Russ Cusack provided an overview of the purpose of the policy.

Competitive Integrated Employment

Russ Cusack provided an overview of the purpose of the policy and explained AbilityOne contracts and how it relates to the policy. Borgi Beeler with Kalix was present to provide public input explaining the business of Kalix and how they work with the community and community employment. They are doing less Ability One contracts and they are focusing on competitive integrated employment. However there are people that want to keep their Ability One jobs. Borgi feels that the full spectrum of options should be kept available to individuals. She requested to continue to refer to AbilityOne despite with WIOA states.

Action: A motion was made by Bruce Murry and seconded Jason Sutheimer to approve Transition policy as presented. Motion carried.

Action: A motion was made by Jason Sutheimer and seconded by Timothy Starks to approve the Competitive Integrated Employment policy as presented. Motion carried.

Resource Committee – Jason Sutheimer, Chair

They conducted the Employee Satisfaction Survey of 2017 with great responses. The Resource Committee will send out the responses of the survey. There was a data analysis problem and they recommend the DVR staff look at purchasing Survey Monkey

to get better metrics and data in the future for better data collection. Survey Monkey ranges from \$300-\$1000 per year. The Committee recommended looking further into how to recruit and recognize employees.

Employment Committee – Bruce Murry

Discussion on duties as this is an advisory committee. The Committee would like to focus on entities that work with VR and will look at workforce development.

Action: A motion was made by Kevin McDonough and seconded by Bruce Murry to add the Employment Committee. Motion Carried by unanimous decision. Bruce Murry named as the Chair.

Action: A motion was made Bruce Murry and seconded by Jason Sutheimer to assume the responsibility of being the subcommittee for the State Workforce Development Council. Motion Carried by unanimous decision.

Tribal Updates

Russ Cusack for Jamie Hall, - Three Affiliated Tribes Vocational Rehabilitation Project received funding for 2 years from the tribe to cover the cost of staff salaries. They are providing counseling and guidance and 'no cost' services as they do not have additional funding. They will have the opportunity to re-apply for their grant in 2 years.

Next meeting October 24-25, 2017.

A motion was made by Jason Sutheimer to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.